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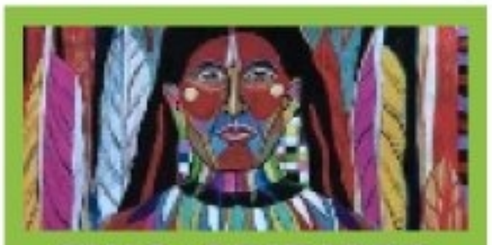
JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO



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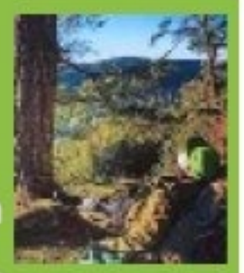

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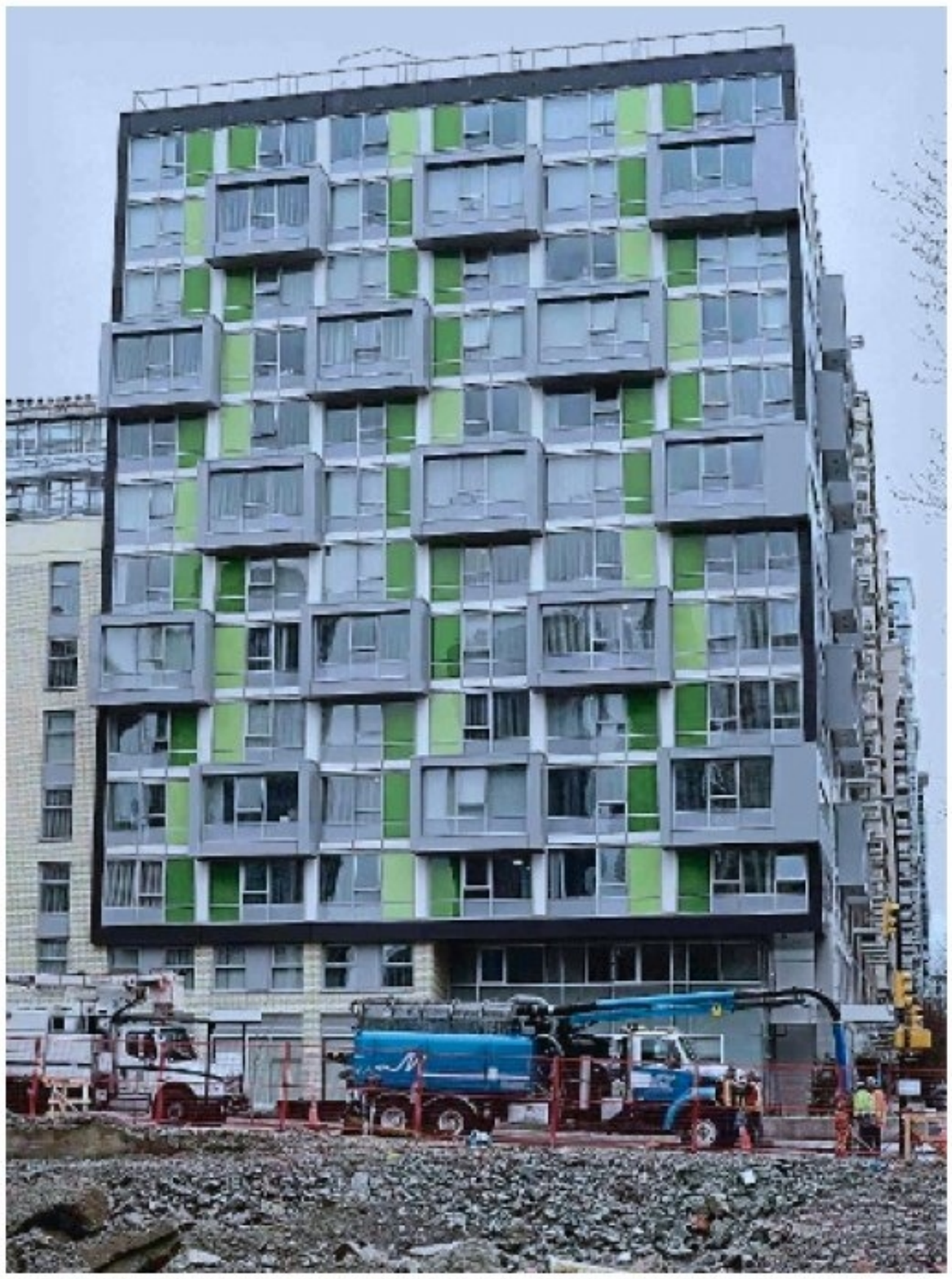
metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Tory leadership hopeful is the poster boy for Guatemalan bathroom hygiene. **Canada**



A construction site at 508 Helmcken St., with new social housing Jubilee House in the background.
JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

$39M loan in question

BC HOUSING

David Eby asks why 'luxury' condo maker got mortgage

Jen St. Denis
Metro | Vancouver

Why did BC Housing loan $39 million to the developer of a market condominium project that contained no social housing?

An Opposition MLA has raised questions about the mortgage in the legislature, the minister responsible for housing has called the deal "innovative" and the City of Vancouver has referred media to an opaque report on the original, very complicated land-swap deal that was struck back in 2012.

"The question is, why on earth would BC Housing lend $39 million to a luxury condo developer," said David Eby, MLA for Vancouver-Point Grey.

"I can't understand why the project was structured the way it was, and lots of people can't. It's an incredibly bizarre transaction."

The first piece of land in question is 508 Helmcken St., where a lowrise social-housing building called Jubilee House once stood, right beside Emery Barnes Park in Yaletown. The city owned the site.

Brenhill Properties, a Vancouver development company, owned land across the street at 1099 Richards St. In 2011, Brenhill approached the city with a proposal to do a land swap. Brenhill would build new social housing at 1099 Richards, the Jubilee House tenants would move in, and Brenhill got 508 Helmcken with increased density.

The company intends to build high-end, luxury condos; pre-sale prices range from $509,500 to more than $3 million, according to realtor websites.

Eby's accounting of the project totals up the $30 million the city says it put toward the project; a $15-million construction loan the society that operates the New Jubilee House got from BC Housing; and the $39-million loan from BC Housing to Brenhill. Land title documents show a $39-million mortgage from BC Housing to Brenhill was registered on Aug. 12, 2016, a month after New Jubilee House had opened its doors. The document includes a request that BC Housing be apprised of the progress of condo pre-sales.

"When you add those numbers up it comes to a price of $288,000 per unit, which seems a little bit high considering the city already owned the property, but, in any event, reasonable," Eby said.

"But if you add a $39-million loan, the price per unit — and these are bachelor and one-bedroom apartments — goes up to almost $500,000 per unit."

A city spokesman confirmed to Metro that the city's $30-million contribution went toward construction of the social-housing building.

B.C.'s Ministry of Natural Gas Development, which holds the housing file, sent Metro a statement saying BC Housing loaned Brenhill $39 million in interim financing for the construction of the social-housing project and says that loan has now been paid. The statement says BC Housing has never had any development in the market condo project.

A source familiar with development in Vancouver said Brenhill would have likely needed financing to both build the social housing and for the period before enough pre-sales had been sold to secure construction financing for the market condo project.

Communications staff at the ministry wrote that BC Housing will be ready to share the documents at the end of next week, following a check for privacy concerns.

Brenhill did not respond to a request for comment.

Dutch cyberbully sentenced

AMANDA TODD

Man accused of tormenting B.C. teen guilty in separate case

The mother of a 15-year-old Canadian girl whose suicide drew global attention to online abuse says she's relieved and joyful after the man accused of tormenting her was sentenced to 11 years in prison by a Dutch court in a separate case.

Carol Todd, whose daughter Amanda Todd killed herself, said she's happy Aydin Coban was given the maximum sentence on Thursday for cyberbullying dozens of young girls and gay men.

"I am grateful to the judges that they looked over all evidence and the testimony and realized that this person was guilty," she said in an interview from Winnipeg. "I am saddened that someone has to go through those behaviours in order to bring joy to himself."

The court in the Netherlands convicted the 38-year-old man for fraud and blackmail via the Internet, according to a statement from Dutch legal authorities.

It gave him the maximum possible sentence of 10 years and eight months, "because of the devastating consequences his behaviour has on the young lives of the girls" in particular, and out of fear that he could commit new offences if released, the statement said.

He pretended to be a boy or girl and persuaded his victims to perform sexual acts in front of a webcam, then posted the images online or blackmailed them by threatening to do so. He was accused of abusing 34 girls and five gay men, behaviour the court called "astonishing." In some cases, the abuse lasted years.

Under Dutch privacy laws the man at trial is only identified as Aydin C.

An Associated Press story from the Netherlands on Thursday reported Aydin C is the same man charged in the Amanda Todd case and that a Dutch court has approved the man's extradition following his trial there. He has appealed that decision and denies involvement in any cyberbullying.

The RCMP charged Coban in 2014 with extortion, importing or distributing child pornography, possessing child pornography and child luring.

Amanda Todd brought cyberbullying to mainstream attention by posting a video on YouTube in which she told her story with handwritten signs, describing how she was lured by a stranger to expose her breasts on a webcam.

The picture ended up on a Facebook page made by the stranger, and she was repeatedly bullied, despite changing schools. She took her own life at her home in Port Coquitlam in 2012, weeks after posting the video.

The Justice Department said Coban would not be extradited before the completion of the Dutch criminal proceedings, including appeals.

Carol Todd said she's confident Coban will eventually face trial on the Canadian charges and she's willing to wait.

"I can afford to wait as long as we get the right end result," she said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Carol Todd holds a photograph of her late daughter Amanda Todd, signed by singer Demi Lovato, in Port Coquitlam in 2013. Her 15-year-old daughter took her own life in 2012 after repeated bullying. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CASH FOR ACCESS

RCMP Sensitive Investigations Unit probes B.C. donations

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

It's been only one week since B.C.'s largely unregulated political donations — which Democracy Watch co-founder Duff Conacher said amounts to a "system of legalized bribery" — joined the RCMP's caseload last Friday.

But the force's criminal investigation into lobbyists' alleged "cash-for-access" to BC Liberal government ministers is already rolling along, Metro has learned.

Several sources revealed the RCMP's Sensitive Investigations Unit was in contact with them this week to request any information related to the allegations.

"They appear to have resources and they're not losing any time getting to work on this," said the Dogwood Initiative's Kai Nagata, who said he also connected the unit with a "whistleblower." Metro also confirmed the unit approached another source — who spoke on condition of anonymity — earlier this week.

The high-level RCMP unit is under the Federal Serious and Organized Crime section's Financial Integrity Group.

Conacher said voters need the truth before the B.C. election. He wants an arms-length special prosecutor named to consider charges before May 9 "because of the sensitivity of this," he said, "and the temptation for politicians to intervene."

IntegrityBC's Dermod Travis said RCMP must have enough time for its case, but the election timing "is a bit of a catch-22 ... because if they were to announce three days before the vote that it is or is not laying charges, it would be seen as interfering in the political process, just as the FBI was accused of doing before the last American election."

The RCMP weren't available for an interview Thursday.

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Chief planner charts course for city's housing problem

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Metro gets the scoop on city plans to deal with price hike

Jen St. Denis
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver's chief planner Gil Kelley chatted with Metro about initiatives the city is considering — including allowing duplexes on single-family lots up to three blocks from major roads — as the city begins its ambitious attempt to prioritize housing affordability, not just for lower-income residents, but for middle-class workers who have been priced out of the city.

Kelley, who was formerly director of planning for Portland and San Francisco, spoke to Metro on March 3. He'll present preliminary housing plan ideas to city council on March 28.

Vancouver's new chief planner Gil Kelley chats about the challenges of creating affordable housing. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Gil Kelley CONTRIBUTED

suite and a laneway house on the same lot — but they're frustrated that they can't do a duplex with basement suites, for instance, or a duplex and a laneway house.

There are definitely obstacles in the planning and zoning bylaw to that kind of thing, and that's a very fruitful area for us to look into. And the same with looking into other neighbourhoods for rowhouse opportunities, whereas now there's just single-family houses.

This is not the first time Vancouver has tried to plan for affordable housing. What's different about this effort?

What has not been part of the conversation is the vast middle income, which is now feeling squeezed. Particularly when you overlay the generational lens on that where young people — even those who are educated and with good jobs — are having difficulty finding housing they can afford.

That means a shift away from highly subsidized social programs to heavily leveraged private development to provide a lot of that housing, whether it's rental housing or first-time buyer's opportunities or family suites.

One of the things the city wants to do is make more city land available for private developers to build affordable housing. How would that work?

The city wants to own the land as a long-term asset, but if it's a project that qualifies that provides truly affordable housing, we could lease the land for 60 to 90 years.

Wouldn't you need federal or provincial help to subsidize rents to make them affordable?

We don't necessarily assume that going in. The city owns sites and there may be 18 or 20 of them, so it's a fairly small piece of the puzzle.

The bigger piece to focus on is, what can private development deliver in terms of what you might call inclusionary housing, where a percentage of those units are at permanently affordable housing (rates), whether those are rental or for sale.

(Vancouver) has had a practice of taking that 20 per cent in some of the projects ... and essentially requiring city ownership of that affordable housing. What does it look like — and this is where we need to do some modeling and testing with some developers — what if (the developers) own that long-term asset? We might actually produce more affordable housing that way.

I think the census data that came out this year showing that some of the more expensive single-family areas have actually lost people has changed the conversation a bit around these low-density neighbourhoods.

There you have somewhat larger and more expensive homes and those homes are no longer affordable for families with kids. What you have are people ... who are empty nesters or investors coming in and buying those homes and that's not serving the working population.

We've incentivized laneway homes; now can we get other accessory suites or allow these larger homes to be subdivided into duplexes? Those kinds of things are what we want to look into.

I've heard from some smaller builders that right now they can build a house with a

How do you roll out these changes without sparking massive speculation?

I think doing a broader suite of things where we can unleash modest supply all across the city will actually have the best chance of dampening that because you'd have supply coming online a bit sooner. I think there are some (policies) we can put into place that loosens some of the rules around duplexes ... Our corridors are half a block or one block deep. Could we look at two blocks or three blocks on either side of a major arterial?

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Spring open for patient centre

HEALTH

HUB will treat addictions and mental health patients

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

A $3.5-million addition to St. Paul's emergency department, geared toward mental health and drug-addicted patients, is set to open this spring in the midst of B.C.'s fentanyl crisis.

The downtown Vancouver hospital treats the largest number of vulnerable patients — almost 11,000 — every year.

The new centre, which will be called HUB, aims to provide acute care to vulnerable patients quicker and connect them with medical and social resources after they are discharged from emergency.

"We see the HUB as being part of the continuum (of care)," said Dr. Bill MacEwan, a psychiatrist at St. Paul's Hospital.

St. Paul's Hospital psychiatrist Dr. Bill MacEwan stands in the hospital's courtyard, where one of HUB's modular units will sit when it opens spring 2017. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

"We're just trying to make the most of everybody we're touching because so often, emergency visits can be seen to be like 'god, I waited a long time and they didn't do much.'"

The idea and initial funding for HUB came from the Vancouver Police Department, because officers were spending more than an hour with mental health patients before a doctor could see them, said MacEwan.

He describes St. Paul's current emergency room as a "crowded, bedlam-style" place where officers frequently assist people with psychosis issues.

"We have a very busy emergency department," he said.

"The Vancouver Police and the Foundation have been great in terms of stimulating this, and great partners for mental health."

An anonymous donor gave $750,000 to the Vancouver Police Foundation specifically for mental-health and substance-use patient care in 2015.

That was a catalyst for other partners to jump in with their own donations, including Vancouver Coastal Health ($3 million), the City of Vancouver ($1 million), and St. Paul's Foundation ($1.7 million).

That money will pay for the construction and operation of a pair of 16-metre long, 10-metre wide modular units that will sit in the hospital's two courtyards. Both will be connected to the main building.

HUB is both a temporary solution and a research project for the hospital, as it prepares to move to a new site in False Creek Flats, said MacEwan.

"This is an interim measure we're doing because the hospital will hopefully moving in a few years. But we can't wait."

WHAT IS HUB?

- Up to 10 new beds for acute care
- A transitional centre with up to 12 beds for discharged patients to connect them with housing and further treatment
- The Rapid Access Addiction Clinic that streamlines opioid-addiction patients from the emergency department to opioid substitution therapy

What can HUB do?

- Reduce average wait times for patients, and the police officers who accompany them, from 75 to 20 minutes.
- Make room for other emergency patients by taking in 6,000 vulnerable patients

Artistic co-directors Amber Dawn, left, and Anoushka Ratnarajah CONTRIBUTED/ANOUSHKA RATNARAJAH

Luminaries hired for fest

FILM

Amber Dawn, Anoushka Ratnarajah join event team

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver's pioneering Queer Film Festival has hired two well-recognized arts community luminaries as its artistic directors.

Out on Screen, the organization behind the annual event, hired back acclaimed author Amber Dawn — who held the role until 2012 — alongside playwright Anoushka Ratnarajah, who started in their new roles Wednesday.

"Every year I've attended, the Queer Film Festival has offered such an important space for so many different queer and trans folks to gather and experience film," Ratnarajah told Metro in a phone interview. "Film is such a formative, revolutionary, beautiful way of experiencing our lives, challenges and histories.

"To be able to come into an organization that's been in existence for almost 30 years and has such an incredible history in the artistic and queer landscape of Vancouver feels like such a gift. As an artist, this is a really wonderful challenge for me."

> **It's so important for queer and trans stories to be on film.**
> Anoushka Ratnarajah

Dawn's book How Poetry Saved My Life: A Hustler's Memoir garnered a Vancouver Book Award and was shortlisted for the Lambda Literary award, which she previously won for her book Sub Rosa. Ratnarajah, meanwhile, co-directed the play Boxes, which won the Vancouver Fringe New Play Award last year, and brings experience in performance, theatre and a short film here as well as New York and Montreal.

"I'm more of an experienced theatre artist than film," Ratnarajah noted, "but it's so important for queer and trans stories to be on film because we've been excluded for so long — especially queer and trans artists of colour — from mainstream filmmaking. But we have been making our own art and histories and stories despite that."

The festival, which turns 30 years old next year, is planned for Aug. 10-20. Its motto is "illuminating queer lives through film."

The event has faced several controversies in the past: in 2002, B.C.'s Film Classification Office tried to ban the festival's opening gala film, about local Little Sister's Bookstore's fight against government censorship. Three years ago, activists protested the festival's inclusion of Israeli government-sponsored films and advertising over human rights concerns, leading to an extensive dialogue process in the LGBTQ community after several artists withdrew.

TRANSPORTATION

Service hopes to hit streets before Uber

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

Uber may be coming to B.C. but fare-pricing legislation — which has yet to be announced — could have a big impact on the industry, according to a Vancouver startup that hopes to hit the streets with a taxi-like service before Uber can in December.

Ripe Rides currently runs a small-scale car-for-hire service with an app that is remarkably similar to Uber's app. But the local company applied for 150 taxi licences in February in an effort to grab some of Uber's market before the tech giant arrives in B.C.

One month later, Ripe Rides is applauding the B.C. government's proposed changes to taxi legislation but says one make-or-break element was missing from the announcement — fare prices.

"What is the regulatory pricing on ridesharing versus taxis?" said Nitesh Mistry, director of business operations at Ripe Ride.

The decision could tip the scales when it comes to creating a level playing field for taxis and rideshare companies, something both the government and opposition party has promised to create if elected.

"That's a big piece of the puzzle in terms of will ride sharing be regulated to the extent that taxis are, where there is minimum pricing," said Mistry.

Coming up with new pricing is a "key priority" and will be done in consultation with stakeholders, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure said in an email statement.

"One of our key priorities is to see a new fare structure in place to ensure the existing industry remains competitive. This is an important and ongoing topic of our discussions with the industry because we want to make sure the rates are fair to all operators and affordable for customers."

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The Rio and Vancity theatres will show the John Hurt classic. CONTRIBUTED/20TH CENTURY FOX

Anti-Trump 1984 screenings hit Van

IN THEATRES

Two cinemas will show the dystopian classic April 4

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

As the Donald Trump-era lines continue to blur between actual facts and so-called "alternative facts," two independent Vancouver cinemas are joining hundreds of international screenings of the classic film version of George Orwell's 1984 next month.

There will be two local April 4 showings — one at the iconic Rio Theatre in East Vancouver, the other at the Vancouver International Film Festival Vancity Theatre in Yaletown.

The screenings' timing was carefully chosen, marking the date in the dystopian science fiction novel and film when protagonist Winston Smith begins his illegal diary with the words, "Down with big brother," followed by his hope for "a time when thought is free...when truth exists."

With more than 160 theatres currently signed up to host screenings, the event's American organizers — the United State of Cinema — said the global event is in response to Trump's plans to shutter the National Endowment for the Arts. The $200-million-a-year (CAD) federal agency funds local arts councils but has long been targeted by conservatives as wasteful and politically inappropriate.

But United State of Cinema said the symbolic 1984 screenings are about more than arts budgets. They're also to take "a stand for our most basic values: freedom of speech, respect for our fellow human beings, and the simple truth that there are no such things as alternative facts," the group's website stated.

> Orwell's portrait of a government that manufactures their own facts...and demonizes foreign enemies, has never been timelier.
> United State of Cinema

"Orwell's portrait of a government that manufactures their own facts, demands total obedience, and demonizes foreign enemies, has never been timelier."

Trump and his White House administration have regularly spread inaccurate, even falsified, information in press conferences, television interviews and on social media — about many topics, from his low inauguration turnout, to the fact that he won with three million fewer votes than his rival Hillary Clinton, or that several members of his administration were in contact with the Russian government despite U.S. sanctions during his election campaign.

The phrase "alternative facts" was coined by Trump spokesperson Kellyanne Conway in a television interview, when confronted on lies the White House told about the size of the President's inauguration crowd.

Actor John Hurt, who played Smith in the 1984 film, died Jan. 25 at age 77 of cancer.

Director Michael Radford's acclaimed film 1984 will be screened on April 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the Rio Theatre (1660 East Broadway Ave.), and later at 9 p.m. at the Vancity Theatre (1181 Seymour St.).

EQUALITY

B.C. sidesteps the heel ban

A private member's bill that would make it illegal for employers to require female workers to wear high heels on the job died when the British Columbia legislature adjourned on Thursday.

But Green party Leader Andrew Weaver says he's confident the Liberal government is preparing to make changes to provincial regulations without requiring legislation that bans footwear requirements.

The intent of Weaver's bill got support this week from Premier Christy Clark.

Labour Minister Shirley Bond says in a statement requiring women to wear high heels in the workplace is not acceptable and she will take action to make changes.

Weaver introduced the bill on International Women's Day over health and safety concerns.

The B.C. legislature won't sit again until after a provincial election on May 9. THE CANADIAN PRESS

An arcade room party at Landyachtz bike and skateboard shop in Strathcona.
JEFF RADOMSKY/LANDYACHTZ

Local businesses play the retro game

ENTERTAINMENT

City bars and restaurants go for arcade look to attract youth

Ashley Singh
For Metro | Vancouver

Some Vancouver bars, restaurants, and cafés are choosing to stylize their businesses with a retro arcade décor to appeal to younger generations and provide a welcoming place for the gaming community who can sometimes feel the stigma of playing games in public places.

One restaurant in Vancouver which has completely embraced the gaming culture is EXP Restaurant + Bar. The restaurant has a variety of games ranging from arcade-style machines to modernized videogame consoles.

Co-owner Brian Vidovic said he is familiar with the stigma of playing games in bars and wanted to start a business where gamers can come in and feel accepted.

"I hated going to sports bars," he said. "This became a concept out of need, not so much just as a business concept. This became something that I wanted desperately to merge all of my favourite things together."

Vidovic also thinks that the trend of gaming and arcade businesses won't be slowing down anytime soon.

"There's a lot of places nearby that aren't hampered by the liquor laws, so I think as we mature there will be more in the city ... more EXP's, more of something else and that's totally fine. I think there's a little bit of something for everybody, everywhere, so it will be really good," Vidovic said.

Another business which has jumped on the arcade trend is Landyachtz, a skateboard and bike shop in Strathcona. Event co-ordinator Jeff Radomsky came up with the idea to start an arcade pop-up when he was deciding what to do with extra space in the store.

> **I hated going to sports bars. This became a concept out of need, not so much just as a business concept.**
> Brian Vidovic

"Anybody could open up a store to just sell people things, that didn't come across as important to me. I wanted it to come across more as a community aspect, Strathcona is so quaint and beautiful and has a wonderful history," he said. "I wanted to kind of contribute to that in a way that was more than just a retail environment."

Radomsky started off with only a couple of arcade machines, but as the arcade started to gain more attention, they installed up to 12 machines and even decided to co-ordinate an event called "arcade parties."

"I wanted to throw the party that you've always heard, you've always wanted to go to but it's never existed," said Radomsky. "So I wanted it to have a really house party vibe, really relaxed, a huge mix of people from every different culture and every different interest."

Radomsky also sees gaming culture trending in Vancouver businesses and thinks it's because of the majority of those going to these businesses are younger generations who are familiar with the culture.

"I'm 26 and this culture is now really appealing to people in my age group because it's kind of bordering that '90's, '80's throwback culture that has something that is kind retro but still accessible to them," said Radomsky.

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VANCOUVERING

Two-spirit works number one at annual queer art festival

INDIGENOUS STORIES

Theme chosen over previous plan to focus on residential schools and reconciliation

Cara McKenna
For Metro

Warrior Indigenous, of South America's Sacred Soil by Cree painter George Littlechild, will be among the works of art at the annual Queer Arts Festival this summer. CONTRIBUTED

Two-spirit perspectives will be featured at Vancouver's annual Queer Arts Festival this summer — and its curator hopes it will open the door for more work on the underrepresented theme to be shown across Canada.

In many Indigenous communities, the term "two-spirit" describes a gender, sexual and spiritual identity that often encompasses all LGBTQ+ people, but was stifled by colonization.

The Queer Arts Festival announced earlier this month that its 2017 event called UnSettled will focus on reclamation in the two-spirit world, featuring performances and an art exhibit curated by Blackfoot artist Adrian Stimson.

"It really means that one body, both genders exist. It comes from a more spiritual space," Stimson said. "These two-spirited people have the ability to stand in both worlds."

Stimson said when he was first asked to curate the festival last August, the general theme was residential schools and reconciliation.

"I thought to myself, that is an important part, but it shouldn't be the premise of the exhibition," he said.

"Indigenous artists have been dealing with those themes for years ... I decided to drop the reconciliation part and look at the history of the two-spirit art movement and queer Indigenous theory."

It's something Stimson has explored academically, as well as in his own art. He occasionally performs with a gender-bending altar ego called "Buffalo Boy," who sports a buffalo g-string, disco cowboy hat and fishnet stockings.

Since he is curating art in the festival, Stimson said he won't be performing as Buffalo Boy. But he has chosen 17 artists whose work relates to the contemporary, two-spirit Indigenous theme.

The artists from across Canada will include Cree painter George Littlechild and B.C.-based artist Raven John.

Stimson said he had a hard time choosing artists, because there are so many who he believes deserve recognition.

That's why, after the festival is over, he plans to look into creating more two-spirit focused exhibits across Canada.

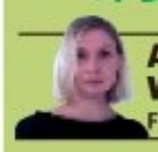
"Part of my purpose in curating this is to actually broaden the scope a bit," he said.

"Individual artists get recognized and that's great, but I want to, through a series of exhibitions, open it up. Because there's a lot of two-spirit artists out there."

The Queer Arts Festival will happen at the Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre in late June.

FOOD NOTES

Serving up casual thin crust pizza pies in Hastings Sunrise



Abby Wiseman
For Metro

Apparently March 14 was Pi Day, which was lost on me, but was pointed out while I was scarfing down some pizza pie at Hastings Sunrise newest pizzeria — Al Buco.

How ironic.

Pi Day aside, sometimes you just want to get a pizza and chow down, but finding good thin-crust pizza without an hour-long wait or upscale atmosphere is tough in Vancouver. Al Buco's unpretentious pizzeria in Hastings Sunrise is a perfect in between for crust connoisseurs who love good pizza, but don't want to make it an event.

The small 10-seater pizzeria offers classic Italian pies made in front of your eyes in an open kitchen. The space is quaint with clean mason jar lights strung up in the window, a menu on the wall and counter service. It isn't licensed, but does offer glass bottle sodas.

I tried the classic margherita pizza and the boscaiola.

The margherita is topped with tomato sauce, basil and mozzarella. The simple toppings let the crust shine through, and all pizzas should be judged by the crust.

Thin, crispy but doughy, and lightly salted, the crust was excellently executed by experienced hands. The tomato sauce was fresh, but not acidic, herby and a little sweet. It was really nicely balanced and went down easy as a margherita pizza should.

The second pizza was the boscaiola, with pan-

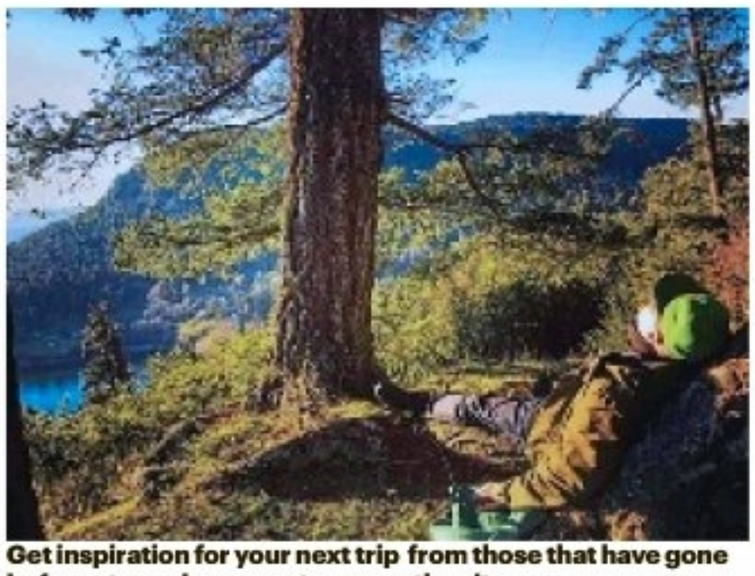
with icons by **Danielle Vallée** from the noun project

Choose your own adventure, then share

VANCOUVER TRENDING

TED-style talks sure to inspire wanderlust

Amy Logan
For Metro | Vancouver



Get inspiration for your next trip from those that have gone before at speakers events across the city. AMY LOGAN/FOR METRO

Local thrill seekers dream of challenging ocean and mountain treks to newfound vistas.

Luckily there is no shortage of trail blazers eager to share their wildest tales and events to offer them a platform.

The upcoming Fascinating Expedition and Adventure Talks (FEAT) on March 30 borrows from TED Talks and Pecha Kucha-style presentations, with action-filled tales delivered in short segments.

Speakers give seven-minute presentations with slide shows, offering stories of their adventures on land, water and in the air.

This year's speakers include a young triathlete, an experienced free climber, a search and rescue worker, and a person with schizophrenia who summits the world's tallest mountains.

Bluewater Cruising Association recently hosted its popular annual Ocean Cruising Adventures Speaker Series with talks ranging from a family's sailboat voyage from Vancouver to Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska and home again, to a couple's seven-year, 55,000-kilometre Asia Pacific voyage on a nine-metre sailboat.

The Association seeks to inspire those "with an active interest in offshore cruising" by offering guest lecturers who discuss their own sailing adventures," according to spokesperson Shannon Rae.

"The sharing of exciting experiences fosters the idea of others doing the same thing," she said. At their Vancouver Club Night, Sarah Richardson, who had previously only sailed for a few hours, gave a talk about her adventure with 13 other women on a 21-day offshore passage from Brazil to French Guyana.

At the upcoming British Columbia Mountaineering Club's Pecha Kucha, a monthly social presentation, members share knowledge and alpine stories in five to 10-minute talks, from getting lost in the Waddington Range to a canyoneering trip through Snake Canyon in Oman. The presentation, featuring exciting and risky tales of mountaineering, are held at the ANZA Club.

G Adventures, an adventure travel company focusing on sustainable tours, hosts monthly travel talks on the company's most popular destinations. All told, the staff have travelled to over 60 countries and all seven continents, noted Cynthia Connell, whose enviable job title reads magician/travel guru.

Popular talks have included tales of adventuring in Peru, the Galapagos, Antarctica, the Arctic and Patagonia. G Adventures has also hosted travel writers, photographers and other special guests.

This next talk, on April 6, is hosted by Travis Kelly-Freiberg, who has travelled in Morocco, and will focus on highlights of a 15-day Morocco trip beginning in Casablanca and ending in Marrakech.

"Travel talks provide an opportunity for people to hear stories and see photos from someone who has travelled to a destination they might not have considered visiting before," Connell said.

In a city bounded by mountains, forest and sea, such tales of adventure are sure to inspire Vancouverites to accomplish ever-bolder feats.

cetta (Italian bacon), mozzarella, mushrooms and black pepper. They ditched the tomato sauce for a cream base. The cream let the musty mushroom flavours through and the salty pancetta cut through the rich and creamy flavours. The crust got a little lost in the cream sauce and I would have liked more black pepper, but still a really nice pizza pie.

All in all, I enjoyed Al Buco. It's a casual spot to grab a bite with a friend, without having to compromise on the quality of the crust.

Bellisimo!

Al Buco's classic margherita pizza. ABBY WISEMAN/FOR METRO

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Charges 'politically motivated': Lawyer

Karim Baratov was arrested as a suspect in a massive hack of Yahoo emails. INSTAGRAM

LEGAL

Karim Baratov is maintaining his innocence

A lawyer for a Canadian man of Kazakh origins arrested as one of four suspects in a massive hack of Yahoo emails said Thursday that the charges against his client may be "politically motivated by the U.S."

Jag Virk suggested that his client, 22-year-old Karim Baratov, is being used as a scapegoat by American authorities.

"I believe (U.S. President) Donald Trump is using this to make it appear as if he is going after Russian hackers," he said. "These allegations are from three years ago."

Baratov maintains his innocence and has no prior criminal record, his lawyer said, adding that people should wait for all facts to emerge in the case.

Toronto police said Baratov was arrested Tuesday in the Ontario community of Ancaster at the request of American authorities.

The U.S. Department of Justice said a grand jury in California has indicted Baratov and three others, two of them allegedly officers of the Russian Federal Security Service, for computer hacking, economic espionage and other criminal offences.

U.S. officials said Baratov also went by the names Kay, Karim Taloverov and Karim Akehmet Tokbergenov.

He was arrested under the extradition act, and appeared in court in Hamilton on Wednesday morning, court staff said. His case was put over until Friday afternoon, when he was expected to appear by video.

An acquaintance described Baratov as an exotic car buff who was popular and flashy but tight-lipped about his personal life — including his job, which involved working with computers.

Also indicted in the alleged conspiracy that authorities said began in January 2014 were Dmitry Aleksandrovich Dokuchaev, 33, Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin, 43, and Alexsey Alexseyevich (Magg) Belan, 29, all Russian nationals and residents. THE CANADIAN PRESS

HYGIENE

Michael Chong a poster boy for Guatemala

No one is quite sure just how it happened, but Conservative MP Michael Chong has somehow become the poster boy — literally — for a top-quality, "hygienic" experience in Guatemalan washrooms.

Chong's bright smile was spotted on a poster Thursday just outside a washroom in the Central American country, with his arms folded, hair neatly combed and wearing a business suit.

The poster advertises "a special service for special people like you" in Spanish text. That special service is spelled out below: "sanitary" and "hygienic" bathroom facilities.

The poster was spotted by a visiting Canadian, Bailey Greenspon, who tweeted a photo of it. "Michael Chong, your stock photo is reassuring public washroom users in Guatemala," Greenspon tweeted.

Chong responded with tongue firmly in cheek. "Just part of the Chong campaign's international outreach in Latin America," the leadership hopeful tweeted in reply, adding the hashtag, "#chongtourage" to the end of his post.

Chisholm Pothier, communications director for Chong's leadership campaign, said he doesn't know for sure how Chong ended up being the face of toilet breaks in Guatemala, but it could be because the photos on Chong's website were at one point open for use.

Chong has been a model for nature's call in Guatemala since at least 2015, when another Canadian, Tim McIntosh, said he saw the politician's face on a poster there.

"He actually looks really good," Pothier said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Bailey Greenspon and a poster of Michael Chong. CONTRIBUTED

POLITICS

O'Leary claims the Tory leadership race is 'rigged'

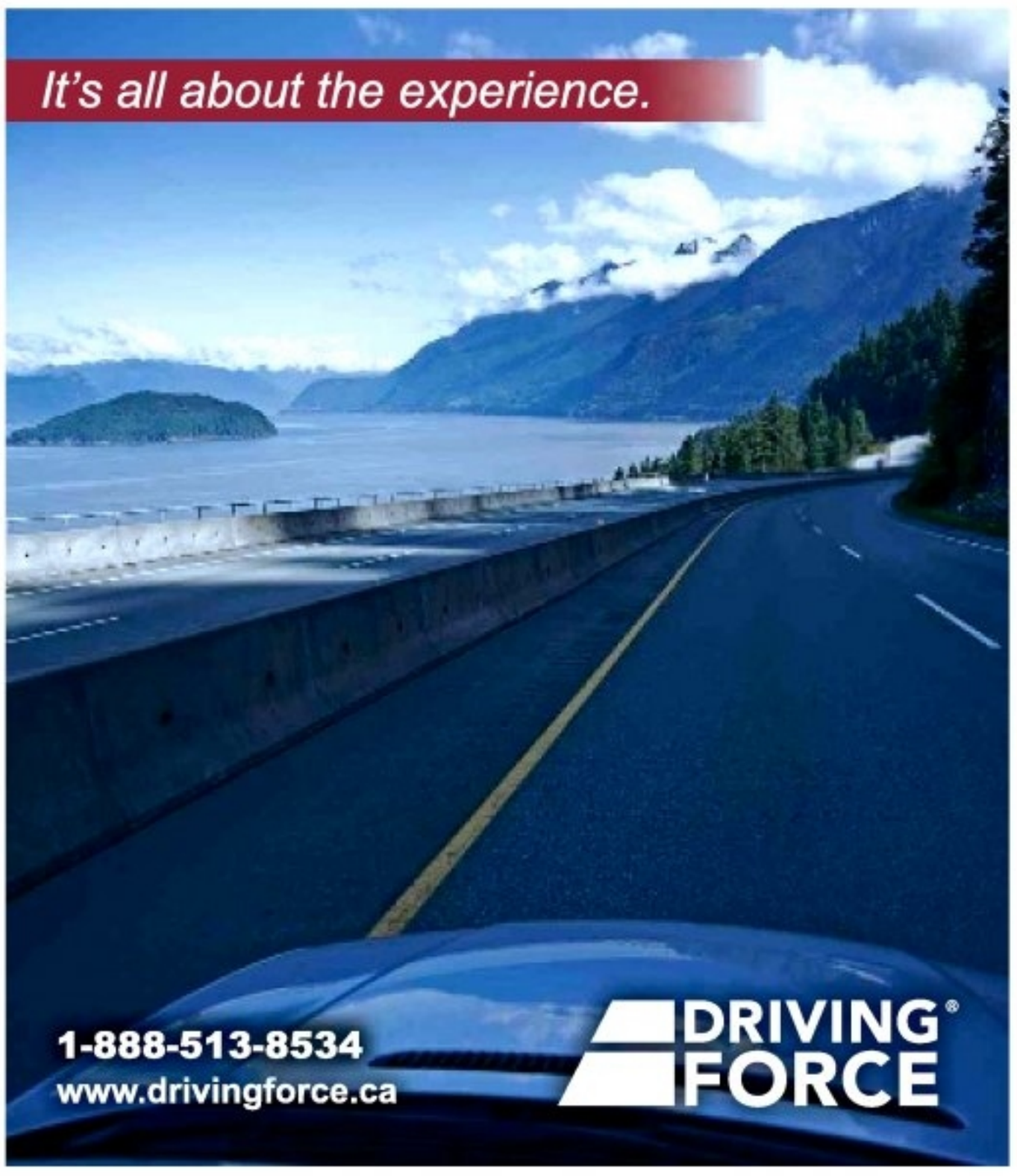
Federal Conservative leadership hopeful Kevin O'Leary's campaign is making allegations of what it calls "fraud" and "widespread vote rigging" in the race.

The celebrity businessman's campaign issued a statement Thursday accusing "campaign activists" of using untraceable prepaid credit cards to sign up fake members. The statement says that would violate federal election and campaign financing laws, adding O'Leary's campaign has complained to the party.

Kevin O'Leary

His campaign speculates some of those who have been signed up might not even know they're members.

A Conservative party spokesman says the party is looking into O'Leary's accusations. THE CANADIAN PRESS



A new kind of diplomacy

POLITICS

Justin Trudeau trying to get an in with Trump through Ivanka

A businesswoman whose lifestyle brand is struggling with liberals. A liberal-multilateralist prime minister who needs an in with a conservative-nationalist president.

Diplomacy is rooted in interests. And Ivanka Trump and Justin Trudeau both have an interest in hanging out with each other.

The prime minister sat with the president's daughter Wednesday night at the Broadway musical Come From Away, the Canadian show about the Newfoundland town that took in stranded Americans on Sept. 11, 2001. It was his second olive branch to her in just over a month.

Some U.S. news outlets suggested Trudeau had been sending a kind of passive-aggressive message: "Justin Trudeau brought Ivanka Trump to a Broadway show that celebrates generosity towards foreigners in need," the New York Times tweeted.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's budding friendship with Ivanka Trump appears to be a way to get an in with her father, the president of the U.S. INSTAGRAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Whether or not that was true, he was also offering a kind of cashless donation to her company.

Trudeau joked of his "bromance" with former president Barack Obama. Shared youth and mutual interest in women's issues notwithstanding, his new bestiehood appears much more a marriage of convenience.

"It is just so Game of Thrones," said John Higginbotham, a former Canadian diplomat in Washington, referring to the television show in which warring family dynasties strike strategic alliances in ruthless pursuit of power.

Like Donald Trump before her, Ivanka Trump has made a brand out of her name. Her name has been tarnished, in the eyes of millions of progressive American consumers, by her father's xenophobia and sexism. Who better to be seen with than the fashionable foreign progressive feminist who hugs refugees?

For Trudeau, daughter diplomacy offers the prospect of a lifeline to a president who shares almost none of his principles but who often appears to value personal relationships over ideology and policy — and who appreciates a political gift. Donald Trump has lavished praise upon chief executives who have let him take undeserved credit for their investments.

"It looks as if foreign leaders think the way to approach Trump is by direct or indirect appeals to his ego and personality, rather than in terms of national interests," said Charles Stevenson, a former State Department policy planner who teaches foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University.

Donald Trump, not Ivanka Trump, was Trudeau's original invite to the play, communications director Kate Purchase said. Trump told Trudeau he couldn't make it, Purchase said, "but suggested that perhaps Ivanka Trump could join instead."

"We are committed to continuing to build on that relationship in a positive, constructive way. That means talking to U.S. senators, members of Congress, governors, Cabinet secretaries, business leaders, and importantly: the president and those close to him."

Trudeau's early work with Ivanka Trump has paid at least superficial dividends. Trump boasted in his high-profile address to Congress of the new Canada-U.S. council on women in business; Trudeau was the only foreign leader he mentioned by name. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Another judge blocks Muslim ban

Rejecting arguments from the government that President Donald Trump's revised travel ban was substantially different from the first one, judges in Hawaii and Maryland blocked the executive order from taking effect as scheduled on Thursday, using the president's own words as evidence that the order discriminates against Muslims.

The rulings in Hawaii late Wednesday and in Maryland early Thursday were victories for civil liberties groups and advocates for immigrants and refugees, who argued that a temporary ban on travel from six predominantly Muslim countries violated the First Amendment. The Trump administration argued the ban was intended to protect the U.S. from terrorism.

In Greenbelt, Maryland, U.S. District Judge Theodore Chuang called Trump's own statements about barring Muslims from entering the U.S. "highly relevant."

"Despite these changes, the history of public statements continues to provide a convincing case that the purpose of the Second Executive Order remains the realization of the long-envisioned Muslim ban," Chuang said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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CAPE SPLIT, NOVA SCOTIA

AFTER A 6 KM WILDERNESS HIKE TO CAPE SPLIT, THIS VANTAGE POINT WITH THE HIGHEST TIDES IN THE WORLD, OFFERS SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF THE BAY OF FUNDY TO THE LEFT, MINAS BASIN TO THE RIGHT AND THE PARRSBORO SHORELINE DIRECTLY IN FRONT.
ROBERT AND DARLENE

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Acclimatizing to violence

Living in New Orleans, what's shocking isn't the sound of gunfire, but how quickly it becomes quotidian

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.

A young man stood outside a pharmacy on a busy New Orleans street this week, selling CDs of his music for $5 a disc.

This isn't unusual here; I've seen young men (not so much women) sell music and paintings outside pharmacies and gas stations. My sister, visiting from Vancouver, bought the CD, and listening to it while driving around, we heard him rap about people he's lost.

He seemed young, maybe not even out of his teens, and the people he wished he could "talk for a minute" with were only 20 or 22. It's not explicit what they were lost to, but this is New Orleans, and it's a safe bet guns were involved.

The city got off to a violent start in 2017. In just the first month of the year, 75 people were hurt or killed by gunshots, a 50-per-cent jump over 2016, which was an usually violent year in its own right. Last year, 604 guns were reported stolen — up 19 per cent from 2015 — in a trend that police say fuels street violence and arms gangs.

In a way totally foreign to a Canadian, the normalcy of life here exists atop the knowledge that guns are everywhere. Road rage encounters not infrequently turn to shootings. Sitting in my living room, I've heard shots a handful of times. It only took a few months before that fact stopped surprising me, and I play the same game as my neighbours: gunshot or fireworks?

The news headlines become routine. A man was shot in an apartment complex in the city's east end on Sunday. Two men and a woman were killed in the Metairie suburb on Wednesday. Last week, a 30-year-old mother and her six-year-old and 10-year-old sons were all shot dead.

In a recent piece for NPR, a reporter noted how mundane all this violence has become, how people absorb it into their daily lives as fact, endure it like the weather.

But it's not exactly that simple. Gun violence is both mundane and an omnipresent threat. It's a psychological underpinning to otherwise innocuous decisions you might make, such as what street to walk down, or whether to flip the bird to another driver.

With U.S. President Donald Trump's crusade against "inner cities," the long-debunked "law and order" approach is reigning again in Washington, even though we know that violence is learned, that offenders have often been victims and ending the cycle requires dramatic improvements to health, education, employment and safety. But perhaps the most frustrating fact is just how easy it is to drop into a city so emblematic of this country's racial inequality and extraordinary gun violence, and feel the current of acceptance pull you in, even just a little.

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metro SCIENCE

Your essential science news

Five a day keeps the blues away : The more vegetables you eat, the less stressed you are, an Australian study says

DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

ON A WING AND A GAME PLAYER

Honeybees are in trouble. For years, they've been plagued with Colony Collapse Disorder, a strange syndrome killing masses of bees. Why? It's a complicated combo of pesticides, parasites and other factors. For the future of our food supply and economy, we must protect pollinators. But studying them is time-consuming and expensive. **Thanks to a some clever math, that may be about to change.**

WHAT IS BEE ++?
It's a computer program created by Western University mathematicians **Matt Betti** and **Josh LeClair**.

BEE FOR ALL
Bee++ is free, open source and written in the common programming language **C++** (hence the name).

CHOOSE YOUR CHALLENGES
You can mess around with many factors that affect bees, like **Viruses** and **parasites** **Pesticides** like bee-killing **neonicotinoids** **Weather**, from real government data **Food**: choose the types of plants and where to put them.

MODEL BEEHAVIOUR
Just like in real life, **different bees have different jobs** (like nurse, queen, forager) and their roles change over time.
As bees drink nectar with pesticides, toxins build up in their bodies, affecting their ability to navigate and find food. They even have a "**digital liver**," so the effect changes over time as the pesticide is digested.

HOW IT WORKS
You plant crops, place your hive, adjust other variables on a grid that represents bee habitats, then start the simulation. As time ticks by, watch and see what happens to the bees. You can also measure outputs like deaths and how much pesticide builds up in bees' bodies.

FUTURE BUZZ
Bee++ was built for primarily for researchers and introduced last week in the journal **Insects**.

Betti hopes environmental authorities may one day use Bee++ to help **predict how their policies will affect bees**.

Bee++ was designed using real research data. The next step is to see how well it predicts the fate of real-world bee colonies.

FINDINGS
Your week in science

STRETCHING SCREENS
Using simple silicon and gel, UBC scientists made a touchscreen that can sense pressure, motion or a hovering finger, even when it's folded or bent. One day, you might be able to just fold out your phone into a tablet.

POWER UP
Speaking of smartphones, Disney has built a prototype "charging room" with a copper pole and aluminum walls that can charge 10 batteries at once — wirelessly. It's safe for people to enter, the company says, and it sounds like something that could come in handy in the future Magic Kingdom.

SOUND SMART

DEFINITION
In evolution, a **clade** is a group of living things including a common ancestor and all its direct descendents. It's one branch on the tree of life.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE
My great-grandmother, my grandma, my mom and me are one big happy **clade**.

CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Play on, kids. Slime isn't going to kill you.

The Great Slime Panic of 2017. If you have school-age kids, you know what I'm talking about.

Mania for slime – a bouncy, stretchy concoction of water, craft glue, food colouring and borax – is sweeping social media.

But Health Canada recently recommended against using borax in children's arts and crafts, citing possible "developmental and reproductive health effects."

As a rule, I trust Health Canada's scientific expertise completely. But something about this dictum didn't sit right with me.

Canadians have been using borax, a powdery white mineral, as a household detergent for more than a century. And small, harmless amounts of boron, its elemental form, naturally occur in fruits, vegetables and drinking water.

Borax can irritate skin and eyes, and you definitely shouldn't eat it, but could playing with goo really harm your child's future reproductive health? And why is the government suddenly concerned about it?

The second question is easier. Health Canada has launched a long-term project evaluating the safety of chemicals used for a long time, but perhaps not scrutinized enough back in the day.

For insight into the first question, I asked medical toxicologist Dr. Andrew Stolbach.

The highlights: Long-term exposure to high doses of boron is linked to testicular abnormalities in dogs and rats. These studies are small and mostly more than 20 years old.

There are a few small studies of people exposed to high levels of boron for years, which showed slightly elevated rates of fertility problems and miscarriage. But the difference was not significant.

Bottom line: he's fine with his five-year-old daughter playing with borax slime now and then.

"To me, it's a very, very small risk. And it's a theoretical risk."

Science Question?
genna.buck@metronews.ca

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MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

Tale's real beauty is humanity

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Director Bill Condon takes cue from 1946 version of film

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Poet Paul Éluard said that to understand Jean Cocteau's 1946 version of La Belle et la Bête — Beauty and the Beast — you must love your dog more than your car. His comment is baffling only if you haven't seen the movie.

Once Cocteau's film is seen, it's apparent that what makes his version rewarding is that it values the organic over the mechanical — even the special effects are handmade. It refuses to allow the technical aspects of the film to interfere with the humanity of the story

This weekend Disney will have their collective fingers crossed that audiences will favour their poodles over their RVs as they release the big-budget, live-action version of Beauty and the Beast starring Emma Watson.

Director Bill Condon says the animated 1991 Disney classic was an inspiration for the new film, but adds he also drew from everything from Twilight and Frankenstein to a 1932 musical comedy called Love Me Tonight when creating the look for the new movie.

He also mentions La Belle et la Bête. "A film I really love." His take on the Beast looked back to the movie, cribbing the character's combination of ferocity and romance from Cocteau.

Bill Condon took inspiration from a variety of films, including Jean Cocteau's La Belle et la Bête. CONTRIBUTED

Before taking in the new version this weekend, let's have a look back at the little-seen 70-year old Cocteau classic.

Loosely based on the timeless Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont fairy tale, the action in La Belle et la Bête begins when a poverty-stricken merchant pilfers a rose from a grand estate owned by a strange creature. The Beast strikes a deal with the man.

He'll spare the life of the merchant in return for the hand of one of the man's daughters. Reluctantly the merchant offers Belle, a beautiful girl who had been courted by the oafish Avenant.

At first she is repulsed by the Beast, who looks like the love child of the Wolf Man and Mrs. Chewbacca, but over time his tender ways and nightly offers of marriage warm her heart and she learns to love him for his inner beauty.

Cocteau's version strays from the original story and Condon's adaptation with the addition of a subplot involving Avenant's scheme to kill the Beast and make off with his treasures and an unexpected magical personality switcheroo.

It's meant to be a happy ending, but not everyone loved the new coda. When Marlene Dietrich saw an early cut of the film at a private screening, she squeezed Cocteau's hand and said, "Where is my beautiful Beast?"

Other audiences embraced Cocteau's vision. In his diary the poet wrote of a test screening held for the technicians in the Joinville Studio were the film had been made. "The welcome the picture received from that audience of workers was unforgettable," he wrote.

Others criticized La Belle et la Bête for its straightforwardness, complaining that the characters are simply drawn, the story one dimensional. Taking that view, however, misses Cocteau's point.

At the beginning of the film he asks for "childlike simplicity," inviting the viewer to connect with their inner child, eschew cynicism and embrace naiveté for the film's 96-minute running time.

In 1946 the request was meant as a salve for a post-occupation France that was still dealing with the aftermath of a terrible war.

Today, in an increasingly contemptuous world, the message still seems timely and welcome.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Beauty and the Beast	★★★
T2 Trainspotting	★★★★
Goon: Last of the Enforcers	★★★
The Sense of an Ending	★★★★
Weirdos	★★★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

Mouse House undergoes some real-life renovation

Audra McDonald, who stars as Madame Garderobe in Beauty and the Beast, insists live-action remakes shouldn't upset the animation traditionalists. CONTRIBUTED

INTERVIEW

Beauty and the Beast sparks Disney's new era of remakes

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

Disney is banking on the Beauty and the Beast. After all, not only is it the most expensive musical ever made, but it will also ring in a new era for the Mouse House — one in which the studio will focus on morphing live-action remakes from its animated classics.

Of course, they began last year with The Jungle Book and Cinderella but this weekend's Beauty and the Beast officially initiates a new age of live-action adaptations that just may be leaving diehard Disney animation fans moping.

"Traditionalists might think that it means the thing they love so much is being erased but it's not and it's not being shunned in anyway," explained actress Audra McDonald, who portrays Madame Garderobe in this weekend's remake. "That film is absolutely perfect and no one denies that; Disney isn't trying to get rid of that — they're just exploring."

In fact, McDonald goes one step further, insisting that Disney's investment in reimagining old classics will only benefit fervent film-lovers. While immortal gems certainly have charm, there is a delightful difference in seeing iconic cartoons transformed.

"It just allows for subtler shading that can only be achieved with actual human beings," said the six-time Tony Award winner.

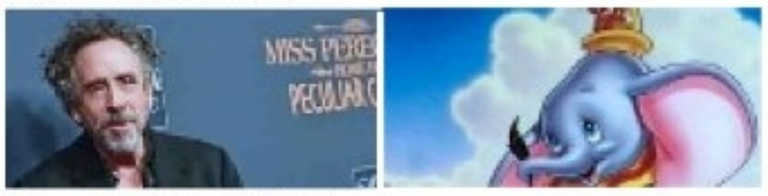
Whether it's the endearing tale of a beauty that falls in love with a hideous beast or any other animated gem-turned-live action hit, the form of any fairy tale will only be as good as its story.

"This story touches the core in our humanity of wanting to be seen for who we are," said McDonald. "No matter what generation we are in, what period of time we're living in, that's always going to be a deeply human thing and that's why I think it continues to resonate."

Three more going live

The Lion King (tbd)

This cherished lion-cub drama will be getting a real-life renovation at the hands of Jungle Book-director Jon Favreau, who has cast Donald Glover (TV's Atlanta) to play Simba while James Earl Jones will return to portray Mufasa.



Dumbo (May 2018)

It's been over 75 years since a big-eared elephant broke hearts in this Disney classic. Now renowned filmmaker Tim Burton will rejuvenate the peppy pachyderm. With a script being written by Ehren Kruger (The Ring), this Dumbo could be a little scary.

Mulan (November 2018)

The 1998 favourite is in the works with director Niki Caro in charge. A tale about one of China's greatest heroines, the studio has put out a casting call for an Asian lead after false rumours that Jennifer Lawrence was cast created an uproar with fans.

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Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) and Spud (Ewen Bremner) are struggling with the transition into adulthood in Trainspotting sequel T2. CONTRIBUTED

Twenty years on, Boyle's wild boys still choose life

INTERVIEW

Long-awaited Trainspotting sequel zeroes in on age issues

As with any long-delayed family reunion, nobody was expecting the sequel to Trainspotting to be a piece of cake, or even a gob of heroin.

Least of all director Danny Boyle and star Ewan McGregor, whose friendship came apart over the casting for Boyle's 2000 terror-in-paradise film The Beach, in which Leonardo DiCaprio got the lead gig McGregor felt Boyle had promised him.

McGregor and Boyle didn't speak for most of the two decades since Trainspotting, a bleak satire about Edinburgh heroin addicts that became Britain's smack-infused answer to the 1990s indie-film revolution spearheaded by the likes of America's Quentin Tarantino and Steven Soderbergh. But now the sequel T2 Trainspotting is almost upon us.

"Ewan and I fell out over The Beach, and it was my fault, and we reconciled about three or four years ago," Boyle, 60, says from Australia, one stop on a worldwide promotional tour.

"So by the time we were working on this seriously, when this script arrived two years ago, we were on good terms and I knew he'd do it. It was wonderful to work with him again. I've missed him, really."

But getting McGregor, 45, to reprise his Mark Renton character — now older but not wiser, and in even bigger trouble than before — was just one of many hurdles to overcome on the sequel path. Boyle also had to round up other key members of the Trainspotting cast: flash Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), psycho Begbie (Robert Carlyle) and sad Spud (Ewen Bremner). He also found room in the film for a cameo by Renton's ex-girlfriend Diane (Kelly Macdonald), while greatly expanding the female quotient with wily new character Veronika (Anjela Nedyalkova).

Then there was the small matter of the script, which returning screenwriter John Hodge adapted from two novels by author Irvine Welsh, the original Trainspotting and its follow-up Porno.

> **I knew he'd do it. It was wonderful to work with him again. I've missed him, really.**
> Danny Boyle, on Ewan McGregor

The story had to be something the Manchester-born filmmaker really wanted to do, because his career has been noteworthy for its never-look-back variety of stories and genres. In the 23 years since his feature debut with the black comedy Shallow Grave, which also starred McGregor, he's successfully tackled horror (28 Days Later), science fiction (Sunshine), family comedy (Millions), Bollywood-style romance (Oscar winner Slumdog Millionaire) and real-life survival drama (127 Hours), among other pursuits.

There were multiple attempts at a T2 script until Boyle got one he was satisfied with.

"We did do quite a few. We had a couple of false starts 10 years ago, which were terrible. They were complete traditional sequels: different plot, same characters. Kind of the same thing again with a different engine, or with different mechanics.

"There was no greater sense of the characters coming together again, other than obviously the trigger to Renton returning. I remember thinking they're not good enough, and we'll never make this. The actors will never agree to do it; I'm not even going to send it to them."

He finally got a script that he and the actors liked, and shooting commenced. But when he was editing the film in post-production, he noticed something he hadn't before: how much the children in the middle-aged lives of Renton, Spud, Sick Boy and Begbie were affecting the tone of the film. All these guys are now struggling to Choose Life not just for themselves, but also for the children they've fathered, and not in ideal circumstances.

"What we decided in the end, in editing, is that it was really about what had happened to these men over time. We thought the film was about time (the 20 years past), and then we realized it was about masculine behaviour over time. It's about what happens to men as they age very badly." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Maritimes' prodigal son stays home

INTERVIEW

Allan Hawco's love for native turf breeding much success

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

Allan Hawco in Weirdos, the film about a teenager living in a small town in Nova Scotia in 1976 who decides to run away to live with his mother. CONTRIBUTED

It's the day after the Canadian Screen Awards and Allan Hawco missed out on the whole affair.

Grounded in Newfoundland after a treacherous windstorm left tens of thousands without electricity, the actor resigned to watch his latest film Weirdos pick up two CSAs from afar. But he actually didn't mind that much.

"I don't like leaving the province," laughed the 39-year-old thespian a day later. "I was bummed that I wasn't there with all my friends last night but there was a part of me that didn't mind staying a little bit later in St. John's."

Raised on The Rock, Hawco is truly one of the Maritimes' prodigal sons. Not only does he still make Newfoundland his home, but it's where the actor-producer decided to film his former six-season television hit drama Republic of Doyle and his new historical Netflix fur-trade series Frontier.

"I just kind of grew up with this severe love for Newfoundland — it's weird," explained Hawco. "I wanted more than anything in my life to produce and create television and film there and work and live there. I've wanted that far more than I might have, in my younger years, to be a Hollywood celebrity."

As such, Hawco is proving an intriguing personality in Canadian entertainment. By shunning the alluring spotlight of Tinseltown to achieve success north of the border, he's arguably inspiring other ambitious actors averse to the seductive pull of American showbiz.

In Hawco's case, it's also landed him a small-but-satisfying paternal part in Weirdos (in theatres today) where he mingled with fellow-minded flag-wavers like iconic director Bruce McDonald (Highway 61, Trigger) and celebrated scribe Daniel MacIvor.

"He's been a mentor to me over the years," admitted Hawco of the Cape Breton playwright and his Canadian Screen Award-winning script about two teens coming-of-age as they hitchhike across 1970's Nova Scotia.

"But another reason I wanted to do the movie is because of Bruce. There's people like them who have committed their lives to telling our stories and believe in it.

"There's a beautiful thing when you do that and people care — that's something that's hard to achieve and when it does work, it's very special."

BEHIND THE SCENES

Weirdos wins two
"(Daniel) was unprepared for the thought that he might win," said Allan Hawco of MacIvor's Canadian Screen Award for original screenplay. Weirdos also won the supporting actress for Molly Parker. "There's so many great films out there and the thought our little movie has made an impact — I'm pretty proud of that."

MacIvor's unique skill
"He has such insight to what we are as people," said Hawco of Daniel MacIvor's award-winning script. "He's able to shine a certain light on it that I think is difficult at times (but) his whole body of work has got that with a light touch of humor."

Hollywood vs home
"If I could be married to both and disappear for a few months to do amazing work, that would be the ultimate dream," said Hawco of choosing a career in Canada over Hollywood. "I just don't like leaving the province."

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metro TRAVEL
Your essential daily news

The Who to become the first rock band to take up residency at Caesars Palace this summer

The *urban Cuba* you don't know

It's a shame, really: 99 per cent of Canadians visiting Cuba stay in resorts. That's not an exaggeration; it's a quote from the director of Cuba's tourism board. We go for the sun and sand, complain about the resort food, and — while we may do a day trip — go home without really appreciating the island nation. Venture off resort, and you'll encounter a country on the cusp of change, rich in history and home to amazing and resilient people. Here are a few things you'll see.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY DEAN LISK/METRO CANADA

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A model exhibits an original creation at Fábrica de Arte Cubano; dancers perform an Afro-Cuban dance; diners snap a photo outside San Cristóbal Paladar; the narrow streets of old Havana; and visitors line up outside Fábrica de Arte Cubano.

Eternal Havana

While the sharp details of the cornices, balustrades and mouldings of Havana's patchwork-painted buildings are eroding like water poured over a sugar cube, they are not dead or abandoned spaces. The sounds of daily life still filter through the half-open shutters or the cracked window glass.

A move is underway in Old Havana, founded in 1519, to restore many of these once- and still-elegant buildings using tourism revenue. Others are being restored privately, including a five-storey building across from Parque Central which once housed a shopping arcade and schools. The gutted, sand-blasted and re-painted interior will soon open as the Gran Hotel Manzana Kempinski La Habana (shown on left). The luxury hotel includes a rooftop pool with views of the Great Theatre of Havana and the dome of the Capital.

Rich in history, the Hotel Nacional de Cuba stands on a small hill above the wave-etched Malecón sea wall in the Vedado neighbourhood. Built in 1930 with the understanding it would only ever fly the Cuban flag, it is a silent character in national events that have played out since its construction.

Some of the rooms in the eight-floor hotel are named after its famous guests, like Errol Flynn, Fred Astaire, Rita Hayworth and Nat King Cole. A mafia suite pays homage to a summit U.S. gangsters held in the hotel in 1946 organized by Lucky Luciano and Meyer Lansky. An adjoining door opens to the one used by Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner. The walls of the private bar, open only to hotel guests, is lined with photos of all the famous people who have stayed there over the last 85 years.

While many hotels have in-house restaurants, try exploring Havana's ripening culinary scene instead. Rent an oldtimer (the classic 1950s cars still being used) or a coco taxi (a two-seater car pulled by a bicycle) and head out to one of the city's best restaurants. San Cristóbal — where Barack Obama ate when he visited in 2016 — is one the growing number of paladares (privately-owned restaurants, as opposed to state-operated ones) infusing the capital's food scene with innovative takes on traditional dishes. The Cuban-Creole menu includes lobster, steak, fresh local fish and roasted pork.

Contemporary Culture

Yes, Havana has — for lack of a better term — hipsters. Lined up two deep along the wall encircling the Fabrica de Arte Cubano, a former factory transformed into an exhibition space, they wait to be allowed in to enjoy the music and performances in the Vedado region of the city.

Held in their hands or tucked in the pockets of their skinny jeans and slacks is a card given at the door on which bartenders will record what drinks are ordered. The old factory is a canvas on which Cubans are reflecting their own experiences in a post-Fidel Cuba. Once you are done with the art, music and dancing, you must show your card at the door and pay for your drinks. Lose the card and there is a penalty fee.

If your trip to Fabrica has you convinced you need a lesson in loosening your hips, Currys Dance School can help you with your backbone slide. The school is located across the street from Havana's only mosque and was recently renovated to allow more space for lessons, which cost 15 CUC an hour. A major investor in the school is Vancouverite Alessandra Quaglia. Coming to Havana for a number of years for an annual Salsa Festival, she ended up staying for a few extra months to improve her steps, and, after her visit, made the decision to invest in the space. "I just went with it," Quaglia says. "Once you get a taste of it, it's like a bug, an addiction."

To get a sense of how important dance and music is in Havana — and the rest of Cuba — no trip is complete without a visit to Tropicana. It's a bit of a cliché, but this outdoor show has been cha cha cha-ing along for more than 80 years with its head-dressed showgirls, baritone singers and elaborate stage numbers. Even if it's not your thing, you are given a cigar and a bottle of rum (one for four people to share) and your choice of cola or water so you can pour at 'libre' when you are seated.

Historical Heroes and icons

With his death in November, you'd expect to see images of el comandante, Fidel Castro, throughout the capital city. His bearded portrait is there, but spying it is rare. You're more likely to see bereted Che Guevara — whose image appears prominently on the side of the Ministry of Interior Building – staring back at you from photographs, painting and street art.

More likely to turn your head from Cuban adoration is a literary hero, one from Cuba's liberators from Spain rather than from Capitalism, José Martí. A statue of the poet, journalist and philosopher looms over the Plaza de la Revolución, his bust sits in front of schools, and — standing with a child cradled in one arm and the other raised in defiance and pointing behind him, finger outstretched — staring from the plaza in front the U.S. embassy.

Still, it's an American whose legend haunts the city and nearby countryside. Like the patron saint of tourism, Ernest Hemingway's memory looms as large as his drinking habits.

Shoulder-to-shoulder tourists pack into La Bodeguita del Medio at 10 a.m. for mojitos (the rum, sugar and mint-filed drink inspiring revelers to carve their names into the restaurant's wooden shuttered front facade), wait in line at El Floridita to sip on an afternoon or evening daiquiri, or pay their respect by leaning through the windows into the writer's home, Finca Vigia, a few kilometers outside Havana. There you can see the mounted heads of rare big game animals, bookshelves lined with well-read tomes and Hemingway's war correspondent uniform stiffly hanging in the closet off his bedroom. Outside, you can get a bit closer to Hemingway's pet cemetery where he buried his dogs; Black, Negrita, Linda and Neron (his pet cats apparently didn't warrant grave markers).

The author of these pieces was hosted by Cuba Tourism, which didn't review or approve the stories.

The Senators will reportedly host the Canadiens in December in a special outdoor Heritage Classic to mark the NHL's 100th anniversary

Fighting Irish escape upset grip of Tigers

Notre Dame's Austin Torres blocks a shot by Princeton's Steven Cook on Thursday in Buffalo. MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

MARCH MADNESS

Another Big Ten team sent home by Middle Tennessee

The Fighting Irish avoided the dreaded upset from a 12th seed in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

Barely.

Bonzie Colson scored 18 points and the West Region's fifth-seeded Fighting Irish avoided a meltdown in the final two minutes to hang on for a 60-58 win over the Princeton Tigers on Thursday afternoon.

After Notre Dame's Matt Farrell missed the front end of a one-and-one with a 59-58 lead, Princeton had a chance to win on its final possession. Devin Cannady missed an open three-pointer, and Notre Dame's Steve Vasturia pulled down the rebound and was fouled.

"We gave everybody a show, right?" Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said. "We escaped. We've been in a lot of games like that where game situations need a big defensive stop. We've been there. I'm proud we're still alive."

Farrell appeared stunned after the game. He wore a scowl as he nearly left the floor through the wrong exit after Cannady's miss.

Farrell finished with 16 points but in a game the Fighting Irish (26-9) nearly squandered an 11-point second half lead. They also led 59-54 with 1:10 left.

Spencer Weisz led Princeton with 15 points. The Ivy League champion Tigers (23-7) had a 19-game winning streak going into the NCAA Tournament.

"We had a shot," Princeton coach Mitch Henderson said. "Right now, this one hurts. When you're in the locker-room, it's hard to say a proper 'Thank you,' because it feels like goodbye."

> **No matter how it looked, we got the win and that's all that matters.**
> Notre Dame's Bonzie Colson

At Milwaukee, another 12th-seeded team was able to pull off the upset.

Middle Tennessee took down a Big Ten team in the NCAA Tournament for the second straight year, beating Minnesota 81-72.

Middle Tennessee defeated Michigan State as a No. 15 seed last March.

This time around, the Blue Raiders (31-4) played like seasoned NCAA veterans with the way they held off the Gophers' comeback attempt from a 17-point deficit.

They will move on to face No. 4 seed Butler in the South's second round on Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

First round in pictures

PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

1. Middle Tennessee, a 12th seed, beat fifth-seeded Minnesota 81-72 for the tournament's first upset.
2. No. 11 seed Xavier ousted sixth-seeded Maryland 76-65.
3. Northwestern edged Vanderbilt 68-66 in its tournament debut.
4. Overall No. 1 seed Villanova defeated Mount St. Mary's 76-56.

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NHL DALLAS STARS TOO BRIGHT FOR CANUCKS
Vancouver Canucks' Nikita Tryamkin, right, plays for the puck against Dallas Stars' Esa Linkell and John Klingberg during second period on Thursday. The Dallas Stars won 4-2 on the night.
THE CANADIAN PRESS/BEN NELMS

IN BRIEF

Thunder ease past Raps
The Toronto Raptors were virtual spectators for the Russell Westbrook show Thursday. The Oklahoma City guard had 24 points, 16 assists and 10 rebounds for his 34th triple double of the season, as the Thunder roared past the Raptors 123-102 for their 4th straight win.

Westbrook is close to Oscar Robertson's single-season record. Raps' DeMar DeRozan scored 22 points.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grillo leads at Arnold Palmer Invitational
Emiliano Grillo of Argentina recovered from a rough start in cold weather by running off seven birdies for a 5-under 67, giving him an early three-shot lead in the first Arnold Palmer Invitational without the beloved tournament host.

The Argentine, often weighed down by his putting, answered with consecutive birdies.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. stand by boycott

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Deadline passes as women's hockey team keeps its word

A deadline for the U.S. women's hockey team to decide whether they will boycott the upcoming world championships passed Thursday without players changing their mind in a standoff with USA Hockey over wages.

"We are focused on the issue of equitable support and stand by our position," the players said in a statement released shortly after 5 p.m. ET. "We continue to be grateful for the encouragement and loyalty of our fans."

The powerhouse U.S. women's program has been plunged into chaos less than a week before the scheduled start of training camp and just over two weeks from defending its world championship gold medal on home ice in Plymouth, Mich. Coach Ken Klee was replaced by Robb Stauber earlier this month, and now it's unclear how USA Hockey will fill its roster for a tournament it has won six of the past eight times and was expected to serve as a measuring stick for next year's Olympics. just 11 months away.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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2	1	8	4	6	3	7	5	9
7	5	9	1	8	2	3	4	6
6	3	4	7	5	9	1	8	2
4	7	5	6	3	8	9	2	1
8	2	6	9	7	1	4	3	5
1	9	3	5	2	4	8	6	7
5	4	1	8	9	6	2	7	3
9	6	2	3	4	7	5	1	8
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS ON PAGE 25

MAKE IT TONIGHT

Decadent Chinese 5-Spice Chocolate Chip Skillet Cookie

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

You need a chocolate-y splurge that will herald the weekend and this skillet cookie rises to the challenge.

Ready in minutes
Prep time: minutes
Cook time: minutes
Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients
- 1/2 cup melted coconut oil (you can also use butter)
- 1 1/2 cups spelt flour
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp Chinese 5 spice
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350. In an 8-inch oven proof skillet, add coconut oil and place it in the oven to melt. Remove skillet and pour out the melted oil into a glass measuring cup, leaving behind enough to grease your pan; set aside to cool.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder, baking soda, Chinese 5-Spice and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk the egg and then add the sugars and extract. Stir until blended. Add the coconut oil and mix until blended. Pour the sugar mixture into the flour and mix until combined.

3. Scrape batter into prepared skillet making sure it is evenly distributed. Bake cookie for 18 to 20 minutes or until outer edges are browned and puffed. Let cool in the skillet. Serve in skillet or turn out; cut into wedges.

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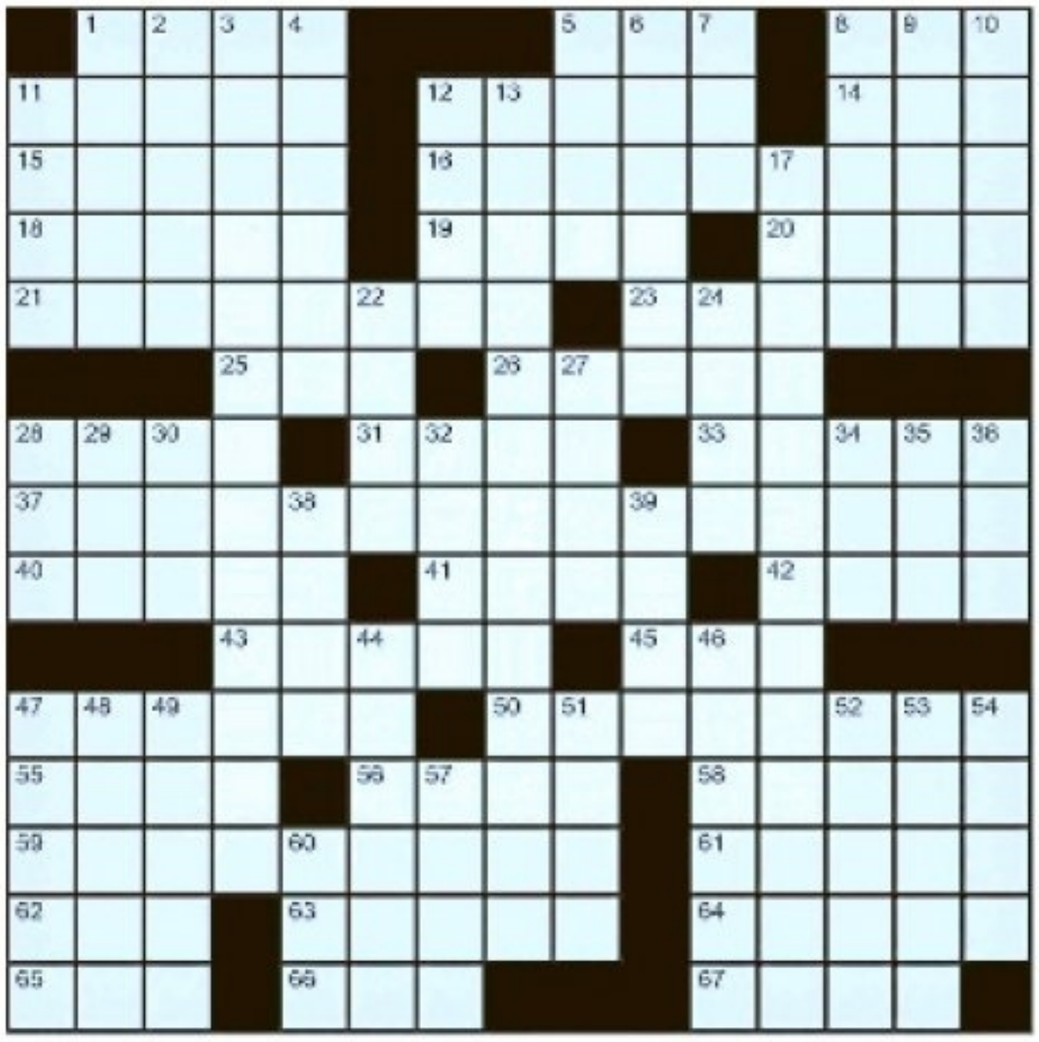
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Vault
5. Initials-sharers of Tina Fey's frequent co-star
8. 'Free' suffix
11. Irish actor Mr. Farrell
12. Attempt
14. Chemical suffix
15. Latin for 'in the meantime' [abbr.]: 2 wds.
16. Effects everlastingness
18. 'Sleep'-meaning prefix
19. Info-finding documents, e.g.
20. Harness
21. Ireland, poetically
23. Isolate, as a stranded castaway
25. 'Earth'-meaning prefix
26. Quizzes
28. 'Ranch' suffix
31. A Doll's House wife
33. Important invention
37. 1911 work by Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw: 3 wds.
40. Does better than B+: wd. + letter
41. American univ.
42. Not in use
43. Work the eggs in the bowl
45. US politics elephant gr.
47. Run by the other runner again
50. New _ _ (Period when archaeological site the Ceide Fields in County Mayo in Ireland was created)
55. "May _ _ you a question?"
56. "..._ _ you want pizza instead?" (Takeout query)
58. Better skilled
59. Potpie morsels: 2 wds.
61. Profits
62. Shiba _ (Non sporting dog)
63. Some electronics
64. Provide, as with some trait
65. Father
66. Fuss
67. Nutrition amts.

DOWN
1. "Me too.": 3 wds.
2. Out on _ _ (Not in one's comfort zone)
3. Book of 1939 by Irish author James Joyce: 2 wds.
4. Complete
5. Buy _ _ of dishes (Expand one's tableware)
6. Analyzes
7. Prefix with 'thesis'
8. Stupefies
9. Barbara of "Gone with the Wind" (1939)
10. Intervening, in law
11. Money
12. Prefix to 'ferous' (Conveying air)
13. Annual parade in March in cities such as Montreal and Toronto: 3 wds.
17. Music group, perhaps marching in an event such as #13-Down: 3 wds.
22. Montreal refusals
24. Food package abbr.: 2 wds.
27. 'Grey' tea
28. Alphabet trio
29. Actress, Charlotte _
30. Chg. card percentage
32. Beatles: "Two _ _"
34. Yore
35. 'Ether' suffix
36. Caustic stuff
38. Derisive cries!
39. Palm starch
44. Crustacean that has 14 legs
46. Hurling siege engine of ancient Rome
47. Unyielding
48. Make money, _ _ living
49. Pretension person
51. Flip a coin
52. Village in southeast Saskatchewan
53. Class/sort, in biology
54. Gaelic
57. Home contractor's gig
60. US intelligence org.

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Today will have some challenges, because whatever you do, you will encounter obstacles. You might feel like you're behind the 8-ball. Good luck.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Your efforts with a group, or perhaps a friend, will be stymied because of some kind of limitation. It could be financial. There's not enough money in the coffers.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You are high-viz right now. Nevertheless, a partner or close friend might object to what you want to do. This will create problems for you. Easy does it.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Do not get involved in discussions about religion, politics or racial issues today, because an authority figure will overrule you or shut you down. Just keep a low profile.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Your plans to investigate how to share or divide something likely will be met with resistance. Not everyone is ready to endorse your ideas. Perhaps you should wait another day?

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
No matter what you try to do to break out of your rut, some kind of barrier will hold you back today. This is a poor day to ask for permission or an endorsement. Don't ask for anything.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
A boss or authority figure at work might squelch your plans. This is why you seem to be world-weary at work today. Just keep on trucking, one day at a time.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Children might add increased responsibility today. Plus, plans to socialize and have fun will be met with obstacles. Something will hold you back.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
This is not a good day to ask for permission or anything from a parent or an older family member. His or her answer will be "Talk to the hand."

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It's easy to fall into worry mode today. Remember: "Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but gets you nowhere."

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Your finances look a bit bleak today. (Why is there always so much month left at the end of the money?) And so it goes.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You cannot ignore your duties and responsibilities today. It's just a fact. Don't try to break free. Just suck it up and do what is expected.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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